United Nations A/61/668

General Assembly

Distr.: General
13 February 2007

Original: English

Sixty-first session
Agenda item 33
Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects

Implementation of the recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations

Report of the Secretary-General*

Summary

In its 2006 report, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on progress made in the implementation of the recommendations contained therein. The present report reviews progress in the implementation of the recommendations of the Special Committee over the past 12 months. It outlines the issues and challenges for peacekeeping in the year ahead, particularly in relation to the most recent surge in demand for United Nations peacekeeping and the strengthening of the Organization's capacity to respond. Strengthening United Nations peace and security operations will be assisted through realignment of peacekeeping headquarters to promote more efficient and accountable management, enhanced integration and capacities, and coherence with peacekeeping partners, and timely and effective drawdown of United Nations peacekeeping operations.

A supplementary matrix (see A/61/668/Add.1) details the progress made by the Secretariat in implementing each recommendation made by the Special Committee at its 2006 substantive and resumed sessions.

* Late submission is due to the longer consultation period required on the draft text than originally anticipated.

07-23745 (E) 200207

I. Introduction

1. The present report to the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations on United Nations peacekeeping outlines progress in the implementation of the recommendations of the Special Committee over the past 12 months, and on the issues and challenges for peacekeeping in the year ahead.

2. Since this is my first report to the Special Committee, I wish to express my appreciation to the Special Committee and its member States for their commitment to United Nations peacekeeping. Currently, 113 Member States contribute military and police personnel to United Nations peacekeeping operations. The list of contributors includes countries with first-hand experience of the challenge of transition from conflict to peace. The presence of former host States in United Nations peacekeeping operations testifies to the possibility of successful recovery after conflict, and to the assistance that United Nations peacekeeping can provide in that effort. Their participation can also bring valuable insights and perspectives to United Nations peacekeeping in the field.

3. The collective nature of United Nations peacekeeping has been further reinforced by the number of countries re-engaging substantial troop and police deployments in 2006. It is gratifying to welcome significantly increased contributions from many long-standing troop and police contributors at a time of multiple global demands for peacekeeping resources. The range and diversity of Member State participation is what makes United Nations peacekeeping a unique collective enterprise. Harnessing that diversity in the service of a common cause is the challenge and the potential of United Nations peacekeeping.

4. That potential was much in evidence in 2006. In the course of a year that was dominated by renewed surge, the redeployment of United Nations peacekeepers in southern Lebanon and Timor-Leste, and a troubling lack of progress in the Sudan, substantial achievements were recorded in many other parts of the world. The successful organization of elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in Haiti signalled real turning points in those countries' protracted struggle to emerge from conflict. In Liberia, United Nations peacekeepers supported the new Government in achieving significant progress towards the consolidation of peace in that country. In Burundi, a well-planned transition from peacekeeping to longer-term peacebuilding is helping to ensure that the gains of the past four years are sustained. The past year also saw the initiation of a process to build on the reform in United Nations peacekeeping that has taken place since 2000 and to prepare the Organization, over the next five years, to meet the peacekeeping challenges of the future.

5. As we prepare to enter the second year of the Peace Operations 2010 reform agenda, it is important to assess the impact of the most recent increase in demand for United Nations peacekeeping. The present report invites the Special Committee to reflect on the implications of the current unprecedented levels of peacekeeping for our collective efforts. In section II it assesses some of the main consequences of the most recent surge for United Nations peacekeeping and the challenges that it presents. In section III it examines how the United Nations can address sustained high demands through, inter alia, realignment of headquarters capacities, deeper partnership cooperation among United Nations and non-United Nations partners, and well-targeted and timely peacekeeping strategies. In section IV the report

identifies a number of key operational issues that must be addressed as a matter of urgency in the coming months. A supplementary matrix (see A/61/668/Add.1), detailing the Secretariat's pursuit of the recommendations made by the Special Committee in its 2006 reports, accompanies the present report.

II. The most recent surge in United Nations peacekeeping: consequences and challenges

6. The members of the Special Committee are well placed to appreciate the unprecedented level of activity of United Nations peacekeeping today. As 2006 drew to a close, almost 100,000 men and women were deployed in 18 peace operations around the world, of which approximately 82,000 were troops, police and military observers provided by contributing countries. Those figures are set to increase further in 2007, with the completion of deployments currently under way in Lebanon and Timor-Leste and the prospect of new United Nations peace operations being established, whether United Nations peacekeeping missions or special political missions.

7. In the past 36 months alone, 9 United Nations peace operations have been launched or expanded: Burundi (United Nations Operation in Burundi), Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Iraq, Lebanon, Liberia, the Sudan and Timor-Leste (United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste), while 4 have drawn down or closed, Burundi, Kosovo, Sierra Leone and, in the context of the previous United Nations peacekeeping operation in that country, Timor-Leste (United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor). The Secretariat has been further tasked to undertake assessments and, in some cases, pre-planning, for potential future operations in Central African Republic, Chad, Darfur and Nepal. In parallel, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has increased its administrative and logistics support to special political missions managed by the Department of Political Affairs, and is currently supporting 15 such field offices. More recently, it has become increasingly engaged in assisting regional actors to develop their peacekeeping capabilities, in particular providing substantial support to the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS).

8. The scope of this activity cannot be measured in numbers alone. United Nations peace operations today are deployed with complex mandates to support national authorities to rebuild the State after devastating and often lengthy periods of conflict. United Nations peace operations are mandated to assist in providing security and public order to host populations but also to support the restoration of basic essential services and to help to begin to tackle the root causes of conflict essential in achieving sustainable peace and development. This adds up to a broad range of mandated tasks, each of which demands appropriate — and often significant — focus, expertise and resources in the field and at Headquarters. It also demands a much higher degree of mission integration at every level and phase.

9. That expanded activity takes place in environments that are often volatile and insecure and where, despite the establishment of a peace agreement, the presence of United Nations peacekeepers may be resisted by factions and armed groups that remain outside a peace process. In those unstable contexts, United Nations field missions are required to operate at high levels of sensitivity and risk, complicating

the implementation of complex tasks and engagement with those local populations most in need of support.

10. Even where political and security conditions are favourable, the operational challenges for United Nations peace operations are daunting. The modern peacekeeping environment is often remote and difficult, with little infrastructure or communications. The current largest United Nations peacekeeping operation, the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) is deployed in a country the size of western Europe that has only 300 miles of paved road. United Nations field missions face practical challenges such as limited or severely weakened local markets for goods and services, lack of housing stock, potable water, or sufficient fresh food supply. The logistic and supply challenges facing many missions make deployment a highly complex issue in which speed is only one of several considerations that must be addressed.

11. The increase in the number, scope, size and operational environment challenges for United Nations peace operations has consequences for the way in which field missions are managed and supported by Member States and the Secretariat. The necessary attention that must be devoted to planning, launching and deploying new missions constrains the amount of time and energy that can be devoted to ongoing missions. The impact of that reality is most often felt in those areas most crucial for the successful and timely termination of a peacekeeping operation: regular reflection and review of strategy; evaluation and adaptation of policies and plans in response to developments on the ground; monitoring and oversight of mission activities and United Nations personnel, early warning and action procedures to ensure a rapid response to problems and challenges as they arise.

12. Another significant challenge is securing adequate numbers of highly qualified and experienced personnel and sufficient quantities of materiel for United Nations operations. The level of activity required to raise, support and rotate the 100,000 personnel currently in the field strains national and regional capacities, as much as it weighs on United Nations peacekeeping at Headquarters and in the field. When coupled with the challenging operating environments that United Nations peacekeeping routinely faces, that inevitably affects the timeline for the deployment and full staffing of a new peace operation. When more than one such operation is being planned in parallel, the impact is greater still.

13. At least as testing is the provision of skilled civilian personnel for mission leadership, management and substantive functional tasks. There is no school for civilian peacekeepers, no brigades of political or civil affairs, judicial reform experts, no commanding officers for field safety, transport or procurement on call and ready to be deployed at short notice to the field. Every one of the nearly 5,500 international and 12,000 local civilian staff currently in the field has been recruited individually on a contract limited to service with a specific operation. Stretching a small band of experienced international civilian peacekeepers across 18 operations and 15 political missions, so as to ensure that good managers and substantive staff with the requisite capacity and specialized skills are in place in each mission has become a challenge of singular proportions. One consequence is an ongoing civilian vacancy rate of more than 20 per cent in many complex United Nations peace operations combined with a high turnover rate of those employed. Burdensome recruitment and administrative processes that weigh down Headquarters and field

personnel services and insufficiently attractive contractual and compensation packages impede mission implementation and lead frustrated qualified applicants and staff to turn elsewhere for employment.

14. The establishment of clear policy guidance, comprehensive training and greater delegation of authority to the field, where appropriate, are some of the key elements in equipping peacekeeping personnel to carry out mandated tasks efficiently and effectively. Equally important, however, are evaluation and oversight mechanisms. The more complex and dispersed United Nations peacekeeping becomes, the more urgent the need to ensure that standards of conduct and accountability are maintained. Incidences of personnel misconduct or misuse or fraudulent use of funds and assets undermine the reputation and morale of the tens of thousands of blameless United Nations peacekeepers around the world and damage the confidence and trust of Member States in the Organization.

15. Ultimately, the most important consequence of sustained high levels of demand, and the emphasis it may produce on quantity over quality, is that it exposes United Nations peacekeeping missions, personnel, and the people they are tasked to protect, to increased risk. We risk the security and safety of our personnel and host populations. We risk the ineffectiveness or misuse of scarce resources. We risk mission prolongation or worse, failure. None of these risks can be addressed in isolation or set aside for consideration at a future date. If we fail to address squarely the challenges currently faced by United Nations peacekeeping, we risk repeating the errors of the past. It is vital that we protect the great advances that United Nations peacekeeping has made in the past decade and enable it to continue to evolve to meet the challenges of the future.

16. The surge in United Nations peacekeeping has been discussed by the Special Committee in the past. At a time when we have surpassed the levels of activity that gave rise to those previous discussions, it may be appropriate to look at new ways of organizing and equipping United Nations peacekeeping to address the challenge of sustained high demand. In so doing, a number of fundamental questions must be explored. What is the baseline of additional resources required to manage sustained high demand without risking effectiveness or security? How might United Nations peacekeeping operations be designed to do more with less, while maintaining the gains we have made in improving the capacity to deliver an effective, integrated response? How can the broader United Nations best be configured to support diverse field operations efficiently and accountably? Those are not easy questions to answer. I hope, in the course of my service as Secretary-General, that we may constructively engage in addressing them and increase the confidence and hope that millions of people around the world already place in United Nations peacekeeping.

III. Responding to the challenge of sustained demand

17. For some years, the Special Committee has recognized the sustained surge in United Nations peacekeeping and the need to consider how that demand can be adequately addressed by the Organization. In its report to the Special Committee in 2006 (A/60/640), the Secretariat outlined Peace Operations 2010, an agenda for reform intended to equip United Nations peacekeeping to meet current and future challenges. That agenda identified five priority areas for attention — partnerships, doctrine, personnel, organization and resources — and proposed to take forward the

implementation of the agenda over the next five years. The Special Committee rightly recognized the agenda as furthering the process begun in the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (A/55/305-S/2000/809) to ensure the success of missions; safety, security, capacity and conduct of peacekeeping personnel; efficient and accountable management of resources; and active engagement with partners.

18. The reform agenda successfully captures those areas of peacekeeping where further improvements are needed and the link between issues of safety, capacity, efficiency and accountability. Progress is already being made across the five priority areas, on which the Special Committee has been informed through regular informal briefings on specific issues. The Special Committee will understand my desire, in these early days of my tenure, to devote more consideration to the reform agenda before presenting a detailed report on the matter, as requested by the Special Committee.

19. Nevertheless, it is clear that there are some areas of the reform agenda where immediate action is required to cope with the current peacekeeping load. The complexity and the scope of today's challenges demand that we prioritize three areas in particular. The first is the need to structure and increase the capacity of Headquarters to plan, manage and oversee United Nations peacekeeping effectively and accountably. The second area is the need to make further gains in integration and coherence across the system and with non-United Nations partners to increase efficiency and targeted support to post-conflict environments. The third area where consideration is needed is on how United Nations peacekeeping missions can be planned and organized to downsize and transition in a timely and sustainable way.

A robust and efficient Headquarters capacity

20. A large, field-based organization relies heavily on coherent and clearly articulated structures, management systems and work processes to mount, sustain and oversee multiple complex operations. Without them, the risk of inefficiency, ineffectiveness or abuse is greatly increased. At a time of huge demand, increased pressure and burgeoning field activity, there may be a tendency to focus less attention on reform and review of operating procedures, in anticipation of a future quieter period that allows more time for such consideration. Yet it is in periods of high intensity that the need for reliable management, evaluation and oversight procedures is greatest to protect the mission and the lives of those serving within it. As we enter the fourth successive year of sustained "surge", the notion of putting off reform for a quieter time becomes untenable. To maintain the confidence and trust of Member States in the Organization's capacity to plan and support complex field operations, and to ensure the safety and well-being of United Nations personnel, United Nations peacekeeping must be configured to ensure effective management, evaluation and oversight.

21. I intend to enhance the Organization's capacity for peace and security operations by realigning the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to create two departments: a Department of Peace Operations and a Department of Field Support. The Department of Peace Operations will have responsibility to plan, direct, manage and provide political guidance to all peacekeeping operations and other field operations that fall under the purview of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. The Department of Peace Operations will lead the integrated planning

process to ensure that all components of mission planning — policy, support, military, police and civilian elements — work together to provide efficient and coherent support to the field as well as an identifiable and accountable interlocutor for Member States, United Nations and non-United Nations partners. The Department of Peace Operations will also be responsible for the conduct and management of peacekeeping operations, peacekeeping policy issues, including the continued development of best practices, guidance and procedures that in turn provide the basis for the design and delivery of peacekeeping training programmes. It will also manage the Secretariat's interaction with troop- and police-contributing countries and reporting to the Security Council as well as to the Special Committee on peacekeeping matters.

22. The Department of Field Support will be responsible for providing support to United Nations field operations, including personnel, finance, procurement, logistics, communications, information technology and other administrative and general management issues, including conduct and discipline. The Department of Field Support will be a service provider to the Department of Peace Operations but also to other components of the Secretariat with a field presence, such as the Department of Political Affairs for special political missions. To strengthen the efficiency and coherence of support provided to the field, and to ensure effective oversight, existing Headquarters support capacities related to field operations will be consolidated and assigned to the Department of Field Support.

23. The realignment of Headquarters offers the potential to improve the speed and efficiency with which support is provided to the thousands of men and women in the field. It also represents an opportunity to strengthen the management and oversight of the peacekeeping resources provided by Member States. Success will depend, however, on the extent to which the principles of United Nations peacekeeping and of sound operational planning are ensured. Unity of command, an essential principle for operations, will be maintained through the authority of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in field missions. Special Representatives of the Secretary-General will report to the Secretary-General through the Department of Peace Operations. Existing reporting lines within field operations will remain intact. To preserve unity of command and ensure effective day-to-day management, responsibility for all peacekeeping decisions will rest with the Under-Secretary-General for the Department of Peace Operations. The Department of Field Support will report to and receive direction from the Department of Peace Operations on all issues that fall under the purview of United Nations peacekeeping. To further ensure close coordination, the two departments will be collocated. With respect to general administration and management issues which do not apply directly to United Nations peace operations, the Department of Field Support will work together with the Department of Management, under the guidance of the Deputy Secretary-General, to whom I have delegated authority for overall management and administration of the Secretariat. That will ensure system-wide coherence of management and administration practices.

24. The initiative outlined above is designed to enable us to meet the sustained demand for United Nations peacekeeping more effectively, efficiently and accountably. The engagement of Member States and the relevant bodies of the General Assembly, including the Special Committee, in this process is essential. Your knowledge of United Nations peacekeeping and the policy directions you set provide the necessary framework within which Secretariat reform can be coherently

implemented. I therefore intend to prepare separate reports on the details of this proposal and its implementation for the consideration and approval of the General Assembly over the course of the current session.

Safety and security

25. One of the basic principles that must guide structural change is the safety and security of missions and their personnel. The realignment of Headquarters must not undermine the security or welfare of the men and women in the field. The Department of Safety and Security will maintain responsibility for providing leadership, operational support and oversight of security management in the field and will maintain close cooperation with the Department of Peace Operations and the Department of Field Support. The Department of Peace Operations will have responsibility for the Situation Centre and for support to Joint Operations Centres and Joint Mission Analysis Centres in the field. The Joint Operations Centres and Joint Mission Analysis Centres are one of the key tools for missions to enhance the security of personnel and, while much progress has been achieved in their establishment and staffing by field personnel trained for that purpose, we will need to examine what military, police and civilian capacities are required to support the Centres in the Department of Peace Operations, including review and comparative analysis across missions and the development of best practices, training, and further guidance for the Centres.

26. Of particular concern to me is the high number of deaths of United Nations peacekeeping personnel that are not the result of malicious acts. Improvements in traffic safety, including mandatory testing of driving skills for incoming personnel and induction training have helped to bring about a decline in traffic accidents and are a good indication of what can be achieved by effective preventive action. More than half of all field fatalities in 2006 were due to illness. That is an alarmingly high number. While the Department of Field Support will support the promotion of safety in the field, I urge all troop- and police-contributing countries to work closely with the Secretariat to harmonize and bolster pre-deployment awareness programmes and reduce AIDS-related deaths among deployed personnel. Member States are urged to apply United Nations guidelines on medical clearance and on medical conditions that preclude deployment.

Integrated planning

27. Another fundamental principle which should guide realignment is integration. Substantial progress has been made to make United Nations peacekeeping a more integrated and coherent and effective activity over the past decade. I am gratified to note the work already undertaken to improve integrated mission planning processes through an inter-agency review and the implementation of integrated mission planning processes in new operations, such as the mission in Timor-Leste. Review and early implementation experiences have been valuable in setting out the issues that need to be addressed in planning a complex peace operation and in clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the various components involved. Integrated planning can not be confined to preparation for mission start-up but must address all phases of a peace operation, including benchmarks to measure progress in implementing mission mandates, the review of integrated plans at key junctures of the mission, and the preparations for a transition from a peacekeeping mission to a longer-term integrated peacebuilding office. Integrated mission planning processes,

as the vehicle for integrated planning, is a process, not a one-time event that must guide cooperation between the Department of Peace Operations and the Department of Field Support and other partners.

28. The early and continuous involvement of all peacekeeping partners is crucial for successful integration. Additional partners include humanitarian and development actors as well as the Department of Political Affairs, on which peacekeeping depends for preventive diplomacy and peacemaking. As the Special Committee has pointed out, troop- and police-contributing countries also need to be continuously informed of integrated mission planning processes in timely and consistent fashion to facilitate national planning.

29. It will be crucial to sufficiently prepare and equip staff throughout Headquarters and in field missions to implement an integrated planning process. That requires information, outreach and training, not only for peacekeeping personnel but for staff from the departments, funds, programmes and agencies, as well as contributing countries, who participate in integrated mission planning processes at Headquarters and in the field. Work is already under way to develop integrated mission planning process training and materials. The next step will be to communicate that to the field and ensure that appropriate field missions have a dedicated integrated planning capacity. In order to ensure that planning, benchmarking and the development of policies and procedures continues, and to provide a single point of contact for interaction with United Nations partners, I propose to establish a strategic planning capacity within the Department of Peace Operations. As part of its functions, this capacity will be responsible for the preparation and establishment of integrated policy and operational teams for planning and backstopping of specific missions.

Evaluation and oversight

30. Another essential principle that must be upheld and strengthened is strong evaluation and oversight. This is a system-wide priority for me as Secretary-General to deepen the confidence and trust of Member States in the Organization. It is a specific priority with regard to peacekeeping, to ensure that peacekeeping personnel are not exposed to undue risk and that every measure is taken to increase the safety and success of missions. The recent management audit of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations by the Office of Internal Oversight Services has drawn similar attention to the need for strengthened dedicated internal oversight and evaluation capacities.

31. In an operating environment as decentralized and volatile as peacekeeping, a framework for risk management is essential to effectively mitigate challenges that inevitably arise in the field and facilitate sound planning and management. Evaluation and oversight of field activities — particularly in support areas where increased delegation to the field is under way, such as personnel management, financial administration and procurement — is also essential to prevent inefficiency or misuse of resources and to take early remedial action where necessary. Progress is already under way to improve procurement practice, including reviews of peacekeeping procurement management and oversight as well as technical statements of requirement and a targeted recruitment drive for field procurement officers. The next step is to establish field-specific procurement procedures, timely guidance and monitoring of field procurement to ensure consistent application of

procurement rules and procedures. I propose to consolidate and strengthen the Organization's capacity for oversight of management and administration in the field within the Department of Field Support.

32. One of the functions of a reinforced oversight capacity will be to monitor, identify and address causes of serious incidents in field missions through Boards of Inquiry. The Board of Inquiry is a case-specific inquiry that is carried out to provide a detailed factual report on all serious incidents in the field, on the basis of which Headquarters can initiate further action and/or follow-up. Almost 80 per cent of Board of Inquiry reports relate to vehicular accidents (particularly those involving death or injuries) and fatalities in the field. They are an essential management tool to ensure proper accountability and to improve safety of field personnel. Board of Inquiry reports are also a key information tool for Member States to pursue appropriate national procedures concerning incidents involving their personnel. The tasks of the Department of Field Support will include the systematic monitoring, review and follow-up of Board of Inquiry report recommendations, and to liaise with Member States and relevant bodies in the Secretariat at all stages of the process.

Conduct and discipline

33. The root of effective management, evaluation and oversight is a culture of accountability. The institutionalization of that culture is a long-term effort that requires clear standards of conduct that are binding on all and a swift and effective response when allegations of misconduct arise. The Special Committee has devoted a great deal of attention over the past two years to one form of serious misconduct, namely sexual exploitation and abuse. I congratulate Member States for the progress that has been achieved to date, notably the adoption of the comprehensive package of reforms outlined in A/59/19/Rev.1.[1]

34. Recent advances include the creation of conduct and discipline teams at Headquarters and in 10 missions; the establishment of two groups of legal experts to provide advice inter alia, on ensuring accountability with respect to criminal acts (A/60/980); continued investigations and the issuance of standard operating procedures on conduct issues relating to public information, handling of misconduct cases and provision of welfare. Mission personnel are becoming more aware of the standards of conduct expected of them and allegations and cases of misconduct are being handled in a more professional and consistent manner, thereby strengthening individual accountability for such acts.

35. Two important proposals are currently before Member States: a revised draft model memorandum of understanding with troop-contributing countries that provides a comprehensive regime to uphold United Nations standards of conduct and to hold those who breach them to account (A/61/494), as well as a draft comprehensive policy and strategy on victim assistance (A/60/877). Those two proposals, together with the future policy on personnel welfare and recreation, are the foundation stone of a framework of accountability and support that testifies to the Organization's commitment to uphold the principles that it espouses. I sincerely hope that progress will be made on those two proposals during 2007 and offer whatever support the Secretariat can provide to facilitate Member State deliberations.

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 19.*

36. Despite the progress that has been made in addressing sexual exploitation and abuse, incidents continue to occur and the United Nations zero-tolerance policy is not fully accepted by all managers and commanders on the ground. During the first 10 months of 2006, 63 per cent of all misconduct allegations involving peacekeeping personnel related to sexual exploitation and abuse, of which a third was prostitution-related. The Secretariat will launch an anti-prostitution campaign in 2007 to raise awareness of the prohibitions that apply while in United Nations peacekeeping service. The Department of Field Support will have responsibility for conduct and discipline issues and for support to field components. A proposal has been made to the General Assembly to convert field conduct and discipline teams into longer-term units so as to institutionalize the efficient and professional handling of misconduct in field operations (A/60/862).

Communications and information technology

37. With over 100,000 field personnel in challenging and often high-risk environments, effective communications is essential for staff safety and security and mission efficiency and success. Technical capacities are an important part of the solution to effective communication. Information technology and management is one tool to increase efficiency and cost-savings, while at the same time, ensuring that field personnel are provided with early information and opportunities to communicate in the field and with Headquarters. Several major information technology reform initiatives are under way in the Secretariat: it is important to ensure that those efforts to establish a robust platform for the provision of information technology infrastructure and services will address field needs as well as those of Headquarters and enhance information management systems and capacities to communicate to and within the field. The Department of Field Support will have responsibility for communications and information technology in United Nations peace operations.

Public information and outreach

38. As United Nations peacekeeping has grown, so, too, has the need to inform host populations, partners and the global audience about our mandate, activities and development. The Secretariat, and in particular, the Department of Public Information, has made strides in articulating the goals of United Nations peacekeeping to the wider global public. More outreach is required, however, to explain the roles and objectives of United Nations peacekeeping and clearly articulate the functions of peacekeeping, its limits and its responsibilities. Member States have recognized the importance of that task. Public information units are now one of the largest substantive components in United Nations peacekeeping operations. At Headquarters, requests for media briefings increased by 60 per cent in 2006 alone. There is not sufficient capacity within the Secretariat to support field components technically or logistically, to plan public information strategies for new and transitioning missions, to mount internal communications campaigns, or to respond efficiently to media requests for information and comment. As part of the realignment of Headquarters, I intend to review how communication, information and outreach capacity in peacekeeping can be strengthened as part of a coordinated effort between the Department of Public Information and the Department of Peace Operations.

Integration and coherence with a broad range of partners

39. Integration is not a process limited to the structures of the United Nations Secretariat. As our understanding of the complex interconnections between peace, security and development has deepened, together with the recognition of our global responsibility to protect those most vulnerable from the diverse effects of conflict, the mandates of United Nations peacekeeping operations have broadened. As a system, the United Nations has a powerful range of tools at its disposal to address the post-conflict needs of States and populations. That capacity to deliver a comprehensive, integrated response is unique to the Organization. To maximize its potential, the United Nations must become the leading global actor in planning and implementing integrated peacekeeping operations and in working with partners in that effort.

Clarification of roles and responsibilities with United Nations partners

40. To complement and facilitate the work under way in integrated planning processes, there are important gains to be made from clarification of the roles and responsibilities of United Nations actors. As part of the realignment process, the distinct roles of all components of the Secretariat with respect to field responsibilities will be clearly articulated. Equally important is clarifying the division of labour and deepening cooperation with regard to functional or thematic activities across the United Nations system. Some good progress has been made in a number of areas. The earliest example is in mine action, where, since 1997, the United Nations Mine Action Service has served as the focal point for coordination of all United Nations work in this area, including the management of the Voluntary Trust Fund. This approach has strengthened policies, planning and implementation of United Nations mine action in peacekeeping contexts, as current programmes in Lebanon and the Sudan demonstrate.

41. A second area where great strides have been made is in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. Integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards have now been established, providing definitive guidance for United Nations activities and will form the basis for planning, implementing and evaluating disarmament, demobilization and reintegration components of United Nations peace operations. The funding of the disarmament and demobilization components of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes through assessed peacekeeping budgets has significantly assisted efforts to improve system-wide integration. It is crucial that the provision of that financial support be maximized by early planning and resource mobilization for reintegration activities led by UNDP. To ensure a seamless disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in practice as well as policy, the Secretariat is currently piloting an integrated approach in Haiti and the Sudan. Joint Department of Peacekeeping Operations-United Nations Development Programme disarmament, demobilization and reintegration units have been established within the two United Nations peace operations to integrate all disarmament, demobilization and reintegration planning, programming and implementing activities. A review of those pilots is scheduled in 2007.

42. More recently, efforts have been under way to strengthen and rationalize United Nations capacities in the rule of law. As with the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration exercise, an important step in the process has been to define the operational activities involved, so that there is a common understanding of tasks and those responsible for them. As part of that effort, the

Department of Peace Operations will lead in the provision of assistance in support of police, law enforcement agencies and prisons in all United Nations peace operations. It will also make planning and technical expertise available to support United Nations activities in those functional areas in countries that do not have United Nations missions. Building on the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration model, United Nations peacekeeping operations with a mandate to support legal and judicial reform will in future include an integrated unit under a single lead, to which United Nations Development Programme will second staff. Further information on United Nations coherence in the rule of law is contained in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Uniting our strength: Enhancing United Nations support for the rule of law" (A/61/636 and Corr.1-S/2006/980 and Corr.1).

43. Implementation of the mandate to promote gender equality in peacekeeping is another area that requires a coherent planning framework with United Nations partner agencies to ensure that efforts by peacekeeping missions to foster equal rights between women and men and to address gender-specific priorities of women and girls in post-conflict environments are built on a sustainable footing. Gender equality as well as child protection issues will be the focus of increased inter-agency consultation in 2007.

44. The clarification of roles and responsibilities in functional areas is the first step to developing policies, guidance and training, establishing rosters of United Nations experts, and building knowledge and accountability within the United Nations system. The test for an integrated United Nations, however, is in implementing an efficient system for field service delivery. The experience of integrated missions shows that that is not always straightforward. Although the authority of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General over United Nations field activities has been clearly set out, the reality is that various parts of the system operate under different rules and regulations. Meeting those obligations presents practical obstacles for joint planning and programming. The streamlining and harmonizing of rules and procedures is one way to address that. However, Member States have a vital role to play in assisting efforts towards coherence by providing incentives and assistance to those parts of the system that are reliant on external funding to work within the framework of a United Nations integrated mission where United Nations peacekeepers are deployed.

Working with non-United Nations partners

45. The Secretariat has long recognized the importance of working with non-United Nations partners in post-conflict contexts. Regional organizations, for example, bring important knowledge and insight about the culture and politics of a country, and play a vital role in creating a supportive regional environment for peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts. They are often best placed to provide long-term political, security and capacity-building support to a State after the departure of a United Nations peacekeeping operation. International financial institutions, meanwhile, are essential in providing analysis, technical expertise and resources to assist the economic regeneration, public administration and job creation that are at the heart of sustainable recovery. Over the past five years, United Nations peacekeeping has made advances in developing partnerships with regional peacekeeping actors, as well as other post-conflict partner organizations. Much of the initial focus of partnerships was on improving communication and coordination

in the field, so that at a minimum, we do not impede or undermine support efforts to post-conflict countries.

46. The time has now come to explore deeper strategic and operational partnerships to maximize the impact of collective post-conflict assistance. As one of the earliest and largest presences on the ground, United Nations peacekeeping often faces international and local expectations to undertake tasks for which it has no mandate or specific expertise. Engagement with complementary partners is one way to ensure that the comprehensive support necessary is delivered effectively and, equally important, that the provision of long-term support is in place when peacekeeping operations depart. United Nations peacekeeping operations can facilitate support provided by other partners, for example, by providing security or logistics assets to support job employment and infrastructure projects carried out by development actors. Another example is the coordination and wider planning frameworks that missions can provide to targeted training and capacity-building efforts undertaken by regional and bilateral actors. We have begun to explore closer operational cooperation and joint initiatives with partners such as the African Union, the European Union and the World Bank, and have initiated a number of practical projects with each. I intend to establish a dedicated capacity for partnerships within the Department of Peace Operations to assist us in fully exploiting the potential of strategic and operational partnerships.

Timely and effective drawdown of United Nations peacekeeping operations

47. There is a risk, in this sustained period of high peacekeeping demand, of dispersing efforts and scarce resources over too wide a range of areas to be effective in any single one. In this respect, it is vital that a balance be struck between the achievability of mandates and the resources provided to implement them. Part of the Secretariat's responsibility to capably implement the decisions of Member States must involve identifying core peacekeeping tasks and distinguishing those from priority peacebuilding activities that other actors are better equipped to address. That demands a strategic approach to peacebuilding in which United Nations peace operations are one of many actors working within a common strategic framework. If this more streamlined approach is to succeed, strong partnership with peacebuilding actors is essential.

Effective transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding

48. The establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Support Office is the first step to forging a coordinated strategic approach. The relationship between United Nations peacekeeping and peacebuilding bodies is crucial because the Department of Peace Operations is responsible for ensuring that the operationalization of an integrated United Nations response in post-conflict contexts reflects that strategic approach. As the lead in directing and managing the integrated offices in Burundi and Sierra Leone, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations currently provides substantial policy and coordination support to the Peacebuilding Commission and Peacebuilding Support Office in addressing peacebuilding strategies in these two countries.

49. The potential value added of peacebuilding structures lies in their capacity to expand strategic coordination in post-conflict contexts to include regional organizations, international financial institutions, bilateral actors and non-governmental

actors; to agree on key priorities and the resources required to implement them, and to identify the organizations that are best placed to provide support in specific areas. It is important that that collective effort be accompanied by clear articulation of the nature of support that can be offered by different peacebuilding actors, including United Nations peacekeeping operations, so that we do not set tasks that are beyond the capacity or the lifetime of organizations to successfully carry out.

Focusing on core business

50. Ultimately, the core business of United Nations peacekeeping operations is support to the early provision and reform of security and the rule of law in post-conflict States. Enabling national authorities to assume their sovereign responsibilities and provide equitable, sustainable security and development lies at the heart of that. Failure to achieve that objective can lead, at worst, to a return to conflict or, at best, to protracted large peacekeeping missions. While post-conflict security is fundamentally related to building a domestic political consensus, supporting security reform requires concrete strategies, skills and resources. It is essential, therefore, that United Nations peacekeeping focus its efforts on that core task. We have significant capabilities in a number of concrete areas, such as in providing security in volatile areas, in monitoring borders and demarcated lines, in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and in police and law enforcement reform and restructuring.

51. What United Nations peacekeeping has not yet developed is a strategic framework to guide the coherent and efficient provision of support to security reform. A core aspect of that is capacity to assist national authorities to identify their security needs and to establish early strategies, priorities and plans for sustainable security, including, where requested and appropriate, defence reform. United Nations peacekeeping missions may also have a role to play in helping to coordinate the delivery of international assistance to security reform so as to ensure that the various components add up to a coherent package and that increased security in one area does not come at the price of human rights, development or peace consolidation. Security reform, ultimately, must take place within a wider framework of support to national authorities in building state structures, institutions and processes that work within the rule of law.

52. The rate and effectiveness with which post-conflict security reform takes place determines the timeliness and sustainability of a peacekeeping exit strategy. It is therefore a key element in transition planning. A more focused United Nations peacekeeping approach must have support to security reform at its centre. The Special Committee has already signalled its appreciation of the significance of security sector reform for peacekeeping in its 2006 report and requested the United Nations to initiate inter-agency consideration of the issue. That process is currently under way, led by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and I look forward to working with Member States on this important issue in 2007.

53. In putting in place a more coherent, focused approach to peacekeeping, clearer policies and guidance are essential. A priority in 2007 will be to continue the development of an overarching or "capstone" doctrinal publication to help define and describe modern United Nations peacekeeping. The document will build on the lessons learned from United Nations peacekeeping operations to inform future United Nations peacekeepers and help missions maintain focus on their core

mandated tasks in complex and challenging environments. Working with Member States and other peacekeeping partners through 2007, the Secretariat expects to produce a baseline reference document for all those training for, serving in and overseeing United Nations peacekeeping operations. It will replace the now outdated 1995 general guidelines on United Nations peacekeeping. The Secretariat is grateful for the support of Member States which have sponsored informal gatherings to discuss the "capstone" doctrine and looks forward to continued collaboration in that important exercise so as to produce a useful resource for all future peacekeepers.

IV. Immediate operational priorities

54. The strategic peacekeeping priorities set out above will require further detailed elaboration and consultation. In the immediate period, however, there are a number of operational demands facing United Nations peacekeeping which must be addressed as a matter of urgency and which require new and innovative solutions as well as resources.

Strengthened military planning

55. With well over 75,000 troops in the field, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations Military Division urgently requires additional reinforcements, particularly for military planning. The Military Division currently has 13 military planners to cover planning of all United Nations peace operations with a military component. Those staff members also plan reviews for ongoing missions, undertake policy development, monitor best practices and develop operating procedures. If the division is to maintain the planning support service it currently provides across the United Nations system, support ongoing and future peacekeeping operations, and, at the same time actively contribute to integrated mission planning processes, an increase in military officers in all sections of the Military Division is urgently required.

56. A new innovation to support immediate planning needs for the expansion of the United Nations operation in Lebanon (United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon) was introduced in 2006. The establishment of a Strategic Military Cell is an experimental mechanism to provide additional military strategic guidance capacity to the Secretariat for a specific operation, not least in supporting risk assessment and scenario development. At this early juncture only some preliminary observations might be made about the initiative. One consideration is the importance of having a Strategic Military Cell closely aligned to and coordinated with the Military Division which should retain overall responsibility for military planning. Ideally, a Strategic Military Cell would operate from within it. A second consideration is the need to ensure that such deployment can contribute fully to the mission planning process. While the Secretariat stands to gain substantially from dedicated military experts with experience of national and other multilateral contexts, it is important to ensure that strategic and contingency planning assistance mechanisms are fully versed in United Nations practices and procedures, particularly the integrated mission planning process. It will be important to undertake a comprehensive review of the Strategic Military Cell in order to ascertain its comparative advantage and feasibility for the future.

57. The Special Committee last year recommended the upgrading of the post of Military Adviser to the Assistant Secretary-General. I also recognize the significance of this position, given the roles and responsibilities placed on the military components of United Nations peace operations and look forward to exploring with the Special Committee how it can be appropriately reflected in the context of overall peacekeeping reform.

Increased police capabilities

58. Substantial innovation is further under way with regard to planning and rapid deployment capacities for police. The establishment of the initial Standing Police Capacity is an achievement in which we can all take pride. At the same time, police needs have already surpassed the assumptions used in planning for this initial capacity and we need to avoid the risk of overwhelming the Standing Police Capacity in its first year of operation. One option to address that would be to build on the momentum which has already been generated in the planning for the first phase of the Standing Police Capacity and which included a comprehensive recruitment process on the United Nations Galaxy system as well as through Member States. I share the view that it is important to review the work of the Standing Police Capacity after its first year so as to incorporate lessons into a subsequent phase of expansion. At the same time, I am highly conscious of the need to make what efficiency savings we can and to maximize economies of scale that might come through an augmented Standing Police Capacity.

59. The demand for formed police units in contemporary peacekeeping has risen exponentially. Increased capacity at Headquarters is required to provide backstopping for formed police units, which, as a distinct element of a police component in field missions, operate under different rules and require specific guidance and support. One example of this is the equipment required to guarantee that every formed police unit is self-sustainable. Many police-contributing countries face practical challenges in providing their formed police unit personnel with this capacity. I invite the Special Committee to explore with the Secretariat how formed police units equipment needs might be met through, inter alia, strategic deployment stocks for formed police units and assistance to formed police unit-contributing States.

60. The Special Committee last year also recommended that the post of Police Adviser be upgraded. The Secretariat shares the Special Committee's recognition of the importance of the police component in United Nations peacekeeping and its increased responsibilities. As the Special Committee has also emphasized, it is important to ensure that the police dimension of peacekeeping is integrated with the other elements of the rule of law in United Nations peacekeeping: legal and judicial institutions, corrections and support to the reform of State security institutions and processes. Support to the restoration of State authority after conflict and its capacity to establish, regulate and enforce the rule of law, demands a coordinated approach that incorporates those policies that are preconditions to the establishment of security, the rule and enforcement of the law. For that reason, therefore, I would propose that the Special Committee consider enlarging the scope of the post of Assistant Secretary-General beyond police to incorporate the rule of law and security reform dimensions.

Senior management and personnel capacities

61. In a time of sustained high demand, effective management capability is essential. The Special Committee has followed the massive increase in numbers of peacekeeping personnel in the field in response to the creation of an average of three new missions per year. There has not been a commensurate increase, however, in senior managers to direct and oversee the growth in activity. The management capacity at Headquarters remains that agreed in the context of the reform process launched by the Brahimi report, which sought to equip the Secretariat to plan and launch one large field operation per year. There is no identified capacity with responsibility for overseeing day-to-day management of activities, in contrast to field operations, where the Head of Mission relies on deputies and/or on a chief of staff.

62. One way of addressing the problem of management overload at Headquarters is to delegate greater authority to mid-level management and to the field. That requires adequate and capable mid-level managers; clear policies and guidelines, control over resources and, as the present report has indicated, evaluation and oversight mechanisms. Currently, there is limited capacity for senior managers to delegate greater authority for substantive and support tasks, given the lack of mid-level management posts at Headquarters. Without this mid-level capacity, managers at the top of the hierarchy remain seized with all manner of operational issues, from recruitment of support staff to daily communication with field missions. The Secretariat is working to support managers in addressing these formidable responsibilities by, inter alia, increasing senior personnel capacities.

63. A key element is to increase and diversify the pool of qualified staff for field service. A policy on senior appointments has been developed and a small capacity established to support the recruitment of senior mission personnel, with particular attention to improving gender and geographic diversity. With the support of Member States good progress has been made in developing management and leadership training for potential and recently recruited senior staff, in particular the Senior Mission Leadership Courses and the Senior Leadership Induction Programme that is mandatory for all incoming senior staff.

64. The development and institutionalization of longer-term management capacity, however, demands that we expand attention beyond current leaders to address future mission management. As the Special Committee is aware, the Secretariat last year presented to the General Assembly proposals to establish a cadre of 2,500 trained civilian peacekeeping personnel which would provide the backbone of mid-level management in field missions. Such a step would enable the Organization, for the first time, to recruit, prepare and retain staff with the skills necessary to efficiently and accountably plan and implement field activities. It would pave the way for career development in United Nations peacekeeping and mobility across the system. The proposal is currently under review and is, to my mind, one of the most crucial investments for the future of United Nations peacekeeping.

V. Observations

65. It is frequently observed that peacekeeping is a flagship activity of the United Nations. For millions of people around the world, it is the most visible sign of the Organization's commitment to peace and security. In the last 10 years peacekeeping

has grown dramatically in response to changes in the global system. That dynamism and adaptability is what gives United Nations peacekeeping its potential to meet the high demands placed on it today. It is on that capacity for evolution that we have a unique opportunity to build confidence and trust in the relevancy and effectiveness of the United Nations in the twenty-first century.

66. The scope of the peacekeeping challenge must not be underestimated. United Nations peacekeepers continue to sacrifice their lives in the service of peace. In 2006, 89 United Nations peacekeepers died in the field, 21 of them through malicious acts. To the families and Governments of those peacekeepers, I offer my deepest sympathy as well as sincere respect and appreciation.

67. In respect of all United Nations peacekeepers, it is important to acknowledge the great achievements that are made every day in the field, often under arduous circumstances. Too often we tend to concentrate on the weaknesses, without acknowledging the many life-changing benefits that United Nations peace operations bring to thousands of children, women and men around the world. Much of what peacekeepers do on a daily basis goes unreported and unacknowledged. As Secretary-General, I would like to emphasize to colleagues around the world that the effects of that unseen work are widely felt and deeply appreciated.

68. I would like to note my appreciation to the States and populations that host United Nations peace operations. It is not always easy to negotiate the presence of foreigners in one's country and at times it is difficult to find a balance between the high expectations that international engagement brings and the realities of long-term, incremental transition. Prioritization in the face of massive needs and the delivery of tangible benefits is frequently challenging. United Nations peacekeeping operations exist to support, not replace, national efforts to rebuild peace. As an Organization we have an obligation and an interest to be sensitive as well as responsive to local needs.

69. For all its adaptability and potential, United Nations peacekeeping can not be seen as a universal solution to the problems of international peace and security. It is not an alternative to political engagement by Member States, or a replacement for national will. There are specific conditions in which United Nations peacekeeping can engage and in the absence of which United Nations peacekeepers have no role. In order to uphold United Nations peacekeeping, we must be mindful of its purpose.

70. Where the political and practical conditions permit, United Nations peacekeeping can be a crucial element of the international community's efforts to build peace. Our collective endeavour is to ensure that the potential of United Nations peacekeeping is fully realized. The current surge points to the urgency of looking at new ways of working. The surge also pinpoints those areas where particular attention is required. I look forward to working with you in addressing these priority areas and in helping United Nations peacekeeping meet the challenges of the twenty-first century.